



Press release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information, call:

Jeff Lindblad, 410-436-4555 or Barry Napp, 410-436-6137

Chemical Materials Agency (Provisional)

Public Outreach and Information Office

June 26, 2003

Release #03-05

ALARM SOUNDS AT ABCDF

ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, Md. – Workers at the Aberdeen Chemical Agent Disposal Facility, which is located at the Edgewood Area of Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., masked and evacuated the Neutralization Building on Wednesday evening after an alarm alerted of the possible presence of mustard agent vapor.

Three operators were draining mustard agent from a ton container when the agent monitor at the drain station alarmed. No other monitors within the Neutralization Building alarmed, but as a safety precaution, all workers in the Neutralization Building—including the three operators at the drain station—masked and evacuated the building in accordance with safety response and evacuation procedures.

As a precautionary measure, the three operators were sent to the on-site medical clinic, where they were monitored, medically evaluated and cleared. Work resumed in the Neutralization Building once it was determined that the area was safe.

The building's monitoring system indicated, and subsequent laboratory analysis confirmed, the presence of low levels of agent vapor in the area of the drain station. This area is located within the Neutralization Building and under ventilation confinement. The monitor detected no agent vapor after the second measurement (approximately five minutes). Agent was not released to the outside atmosphere and at no time was there a threat to the on or off-post community or the environment.

ABCDF officials are investigating the cause of the agent alarm.